



## **Contact**

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## **Arizona Game and Fish Department**

### **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **Three more animals poached in northern Arizona**

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. -- The Arizona Game and Fish Department is looking for the public's help in gathering information about two recent wildlife poaching cases involving two elk and one mule deer.

These poachings occurred along the Perkinsville Highway, approximately 30 miles south of Williams, and just south of the Prescott National Forest boundary. The elk were estimated to have been illegally killed sometime between Dec. 14-28. The deer was illegally killed around Dec. 25-28.

All three animals were shot in close proximity to each other along the road. The elk were found approximately 150 yards from each other. The deer was found approximately 3 miles away from the elk, off the roadway. Department officials believe all three animals were shot from the roadway.

"As with many poaching cases, we need help from the public. Someone may have been in this area recently and may have seen or heard something associated with these cases," said Wildlife Manager Mike Rice. "Someone may have information but is apprehensive to come forward; we want to encourage them to call our Operation Game Thief hotline and help stop poaching. Their call can remain confidential"

Only the heads were removed from the animals. Evidence in the field indicates that a portion of a hindquarter was removed from one of the elk; the rest of the meat was left to waste. Even though evidence indicates these were probably not big trophy-class animals, it appears the poachers shot them just to collect the antlers.

Rice added, "The wasteful shooting of these animals is not an act of responsible hunters – this is done by unethical poachers. These individuals have no respect for wildlife or for the game laws and regulations put in place to protect the state's wildlife."

Anyone with information about this incident can call the department's Operation Game Thief Hotline toll free at (800) 352-0700. Callers may be eligible for a reward of up to \$2,700 for information about the elk and \$1,250 for information about the deer. Rewards may be paid if information leads to the arrest of the violator(s).

These poaching incidents are in addition to two other recent cases that the department is seeking information on, bringing the total to five animals taken illegally. A spike bull elk was shot and left to waste near the east side of the Williams airport on Dec. 10-11. A trophy-class antlered mule deer was poached on the Arizona Strip sometime during the week of Dec. 14.

To learn more about these pending cases and the Operation Game Thief program, visit [www.azgfd.gov/thief](http://www.azgfd.gov/thief).

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